

WEEKLY NEW BRUNSWICK INFLUENZA REPORT

Reporting period: November 17 to November 23 2019 (week 47)

Summary

In New Brunswick, influenza activity was low in week 47

New Brunswick:

- There have been 3 positive influenza cases in week 47. Since the beginning of the new season, 10 cases has been reported, 4 influenza A (H1N1)pdm09, 3 influenza A (H3) and 3 influenza B.
- There have been 1 influenza associated hospitalization during week 47. So far this season, 5 influenza associated hospitalizations have been reported and no deaths.
- The ILI consultation rate was 5.2 consultations per 1,000 patients visits in week 47. The ILI rate was within the expected levels for this time of year.
- No new influenza outbreaks were reported in week 47. So far this season, 1 influenza outbreak has been reported in a nursing home.

Canada:

- Influenza activity was at the seasonal threshold in week 47, indicating the beginning of the influenza season at the national level. Over the past decade, the flu season has typically begun around mid-November (week 47).
- The number of regions in Canada reporting influenza activity in week 47 was similar to the previous week.
- Although influenza A(H3N2) continues to be the most common influenza virus circulating in Canada for the season to date, an increasing proportion of detections of A(H1N1) and B have been observed. In week 47 a third of laboratory detections of influenza were influenza B, which is unusual for this time of year. Hospitalizations continue to be predominantly associated with influenza A.

International:

Seasonal influenza:

In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels in most countries. However, influenza activity continued to increase across the countries in Western Asia. In the Caribbean, and tropical South American countries, influenza activity was low overall, except for Cuba. In Central American countries, influenza activity decreased in El Salvador and Nicaragua. In tropical Africa, influenza activity remained elevated in some countries of Western Africa. In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low across reporting countries, but continued to increase in Iran (Islamic Republic of). In South East Asia, influenza activity continued to be reported in Lao PDR. In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity returned to inter-seasonal levels in most countries and decreased to low levels in Chile. Worldwide, seasonal influenza A accounted for the majority of detections, with equal proportions of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) viruses.

Emerging Respiratory Viruses:

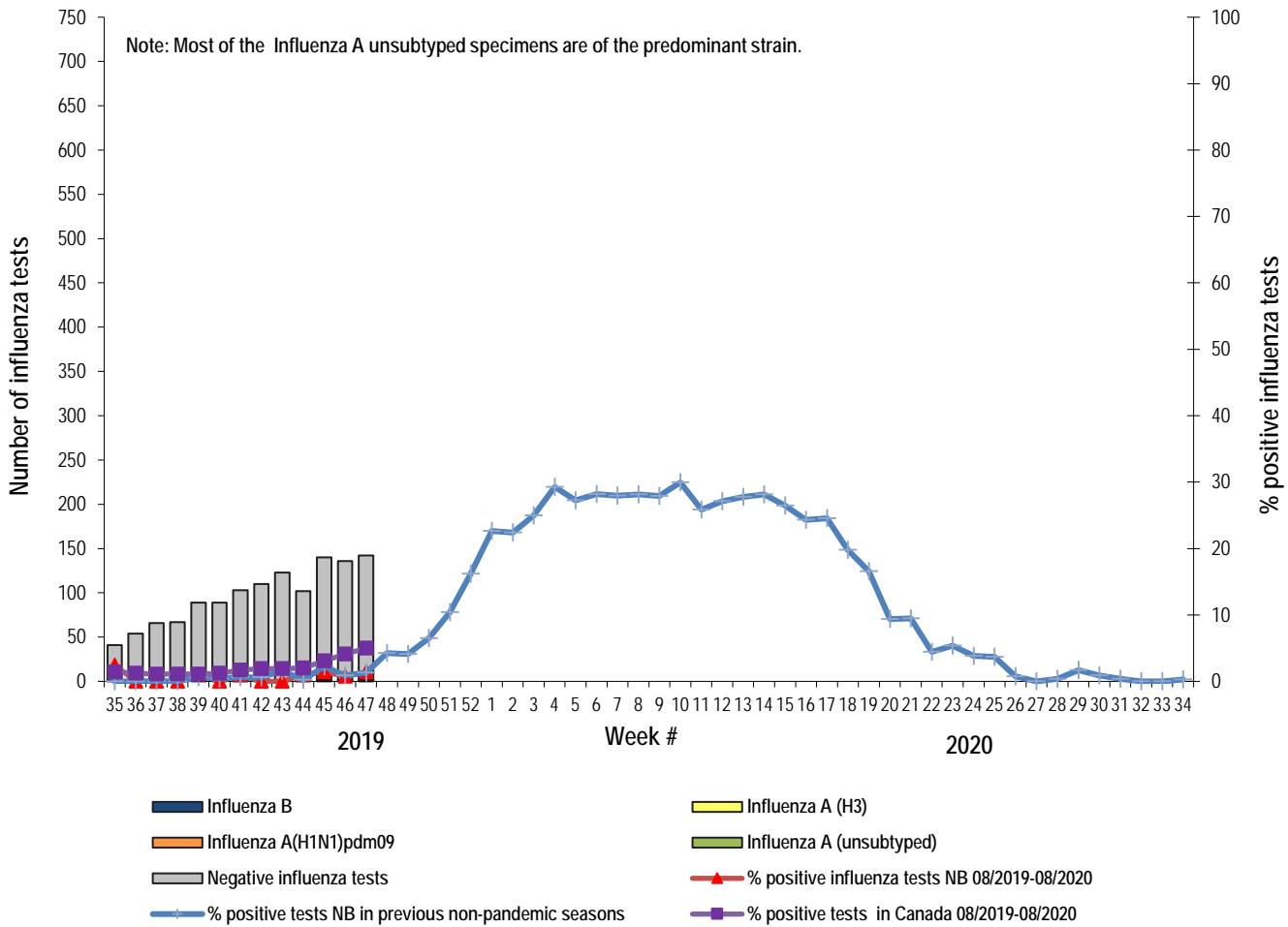
- MERS CoV:
 - WHO: http://www.who.int/csr/disease/coronavirus_infections/en/
 - CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/>
 - Updated Risk Assessment (August 2018): http://www.who.int/csr/disease/coronavirus_infections/risk-assessment-august-2018.pdf?ua=1
- Avian Influenza:
 - WHO: www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/index.html

1) Influenza Laboratory Data¹

- Influenza activity was low in week 47.
- Three influenza cases were reported during week 47, 2 influenza A (H1N1)pdm09 and 1 influenza B.
- Since the beginning of the season, 10 influenza cases have been reported, 4 influenza A (H1N1)pdm09, 3 influenza A (H3) and 3 influenza B.

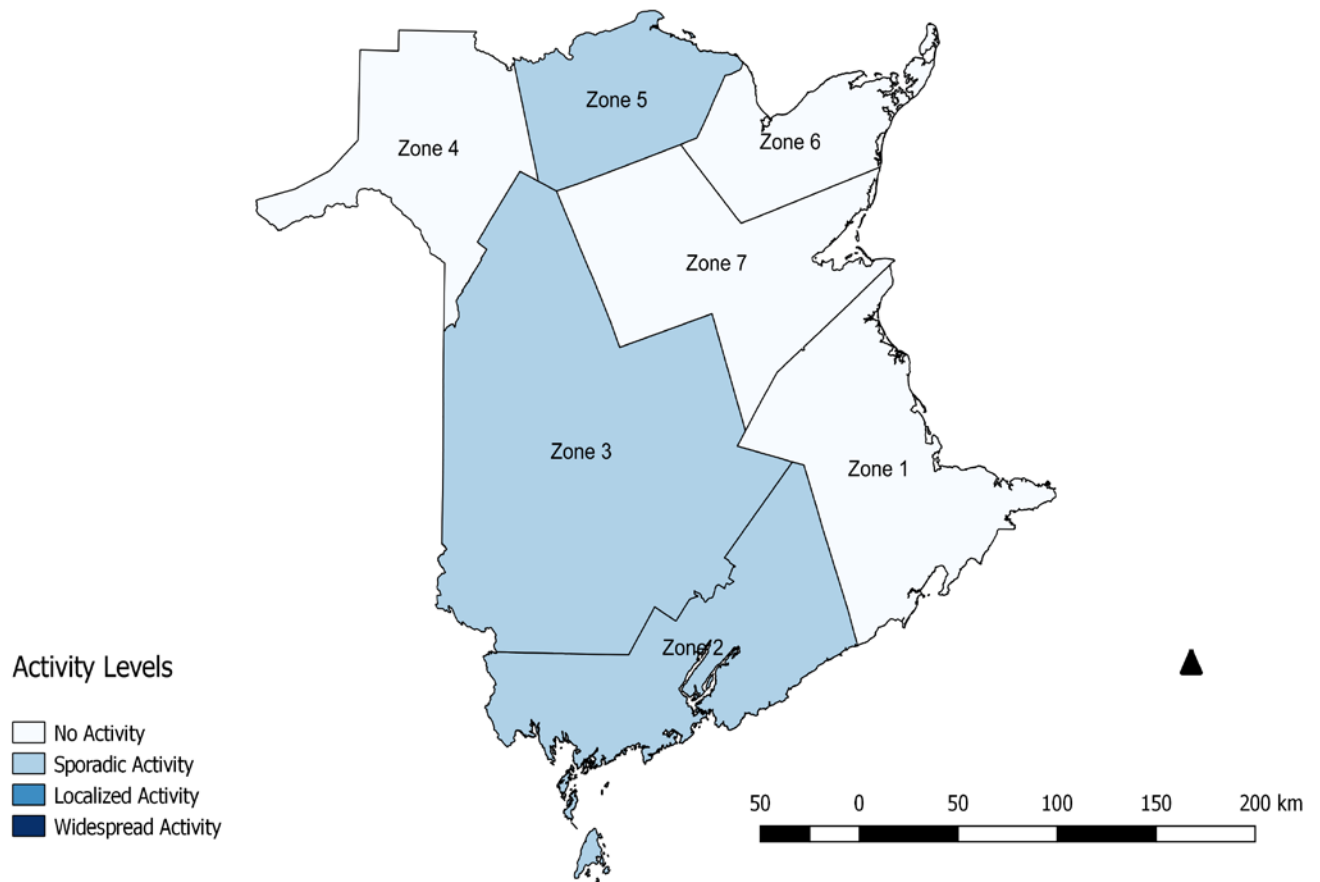
¹ Surveillance specimens are submitted by recruited New Brunswick Sentinel Practitioner Influenza Network (NB SPIN) practitioners, which are comprised of sites in Emergency Rooms, in Family Practice, in First Nations communities, in Nursing Home, in Universities and in Community Health Centers. Diagnostic specimens are submitted by physicians in the community/hospital setting. Influenza laboratory data is comprised of results from surveillance and diagnostic specimens. All laboratory specimens are tested using a real-time PCR assay, which is a rapid detection method designed for detection of all known variants of influenza A and B. All laboratory-confirmed cases are reported for the week when laboratory confirmation was received.

Graph 1: Number and percent of positive influenza specimens² in New Brunswick by week, up to November 23, 2019 (data source: G. Dumont Lab results)



² Total number of positive influenza tests is higher than number of cases since some individuals had co-infection of A & B simultaneously.

Figure 2: Influenza/ILI activity levels³ by Health Zones, in New Brunswick, for week 47, season 2019/2020.



³ No activity is defined as no laboratory-confirmed influenza detections in the reporting week, however, sporadically occurring ILI may be reported. Sporadic activity is defined as sporadically occurring ILI and lab confirmed influenza detection(s) with no outbreaks detected within the influenza surveillance region.

Localized activity is defined as evidence of increased ILI with lab confirmed influenza detection(s) and outbreaks in schools, hospitals, residential institutions and/or other types of facilities occurring in less than 50% of the influenza surveillance region.

Widespread activity is defined as evidence of increased ILI with lab confirmed influenza detection(s) and outbreaks in schools, hospitals, residential institutions and/or other types of facilities occurring in greater than or equal to 50% of the influenza surveillance region.

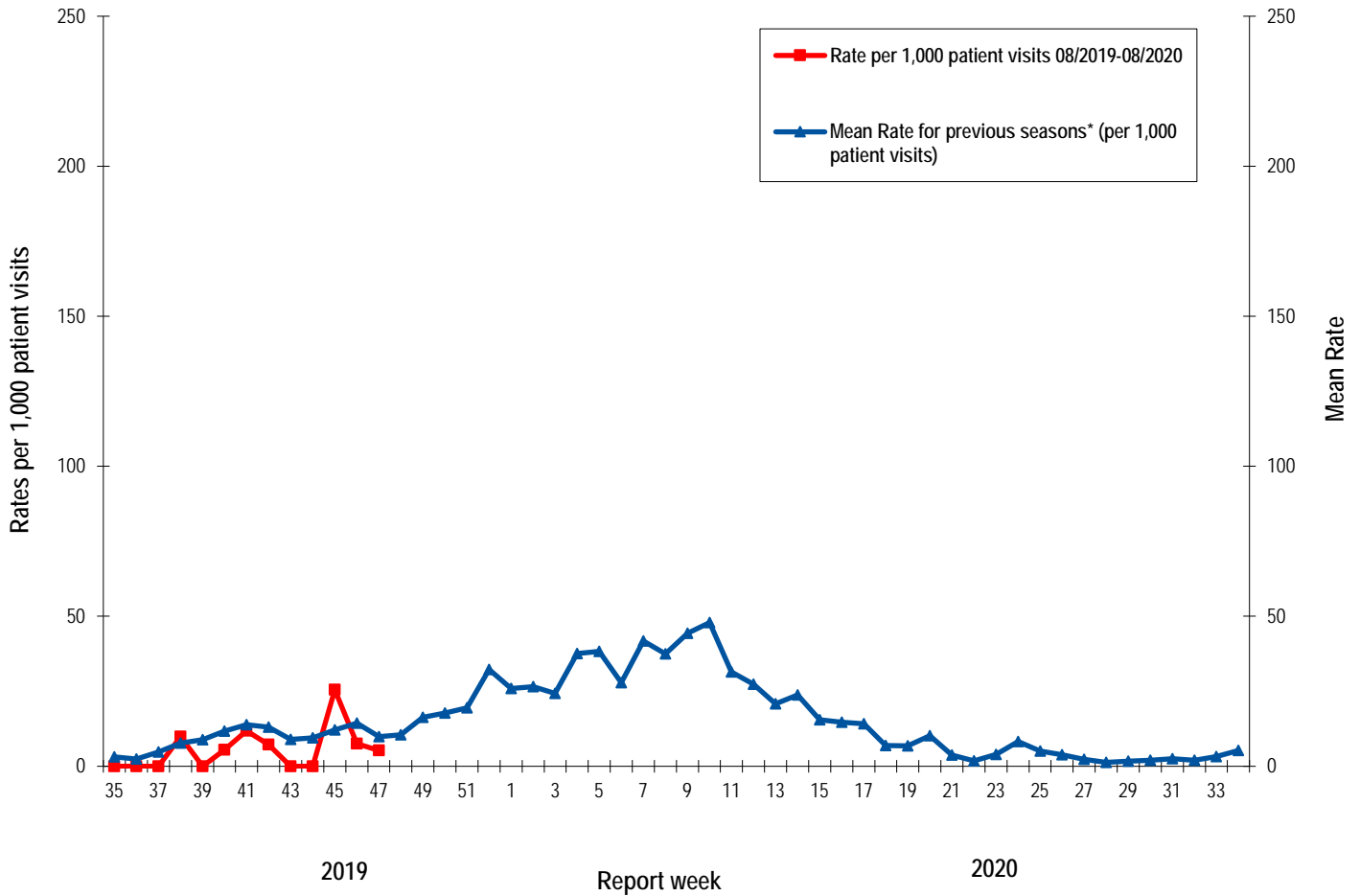
Table 1: Positive influenza cases by Health Region, in New Brunswick for reporting week, cumulative current and previous seasons.
 (data source: G. Dumont lab results up to November 23, 2019)

Zone	Reporting period: November/17/2019–November/23/2019						Cumulative: (2019/2020 season) Aug./25/2019 –November/23/2019						Cumulative: (2018/2019 season) Aug./26/2018 –Aug./24/2019											
	A					B	A & B co- infection		A					B	A & B co- infection		A					B	A & B co- infection	
	A(H3)	(H1N1) pdm09	Unsubty ped/ Other	A Total	Total	Total	A(H3)	(H1N1) pdm09	Unsubty ped/ Other	A Total	Total	Total	(H3)	(H1N1) pdm09	Unsubty ped/ Other	A Total	Total	Total	Total					
Zone 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3	1	0	29	97	1163	1289	130	3						
Zone 2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	6	47	293	346	58	0						
Zone 3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	9	39	260	308	3	0						
Zone 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	28	135	165	6	0						
Zone 5	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	20	84	106	127	1						
Zone 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	36	200	241	14	0						
Zone 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	23	160	192	19	0						
Total NB	0	2	0	2	1	0	3	4	0	7	3	0	62	290	2295	2647	357	4						

2) ILI Consultation Rates⁴

- For week 47, the ILI consultation rate was 5.2 consultations per 1,000 patients visits. The ILI rate was within the expected levels for this time of year.
- During week 47, the sentinel response rate was 32%, for both the FluWatch sentinel physicians and the NB SPIN practitioners.

Graph 2: ILI Consultation Rates in New Brunswick, by report week, season 2019/20 compared to previous seasons*



* The mean rate was based on data from the 1996/97 to 2018/2019 seasons and excludes the Pandemic season (2009/10).

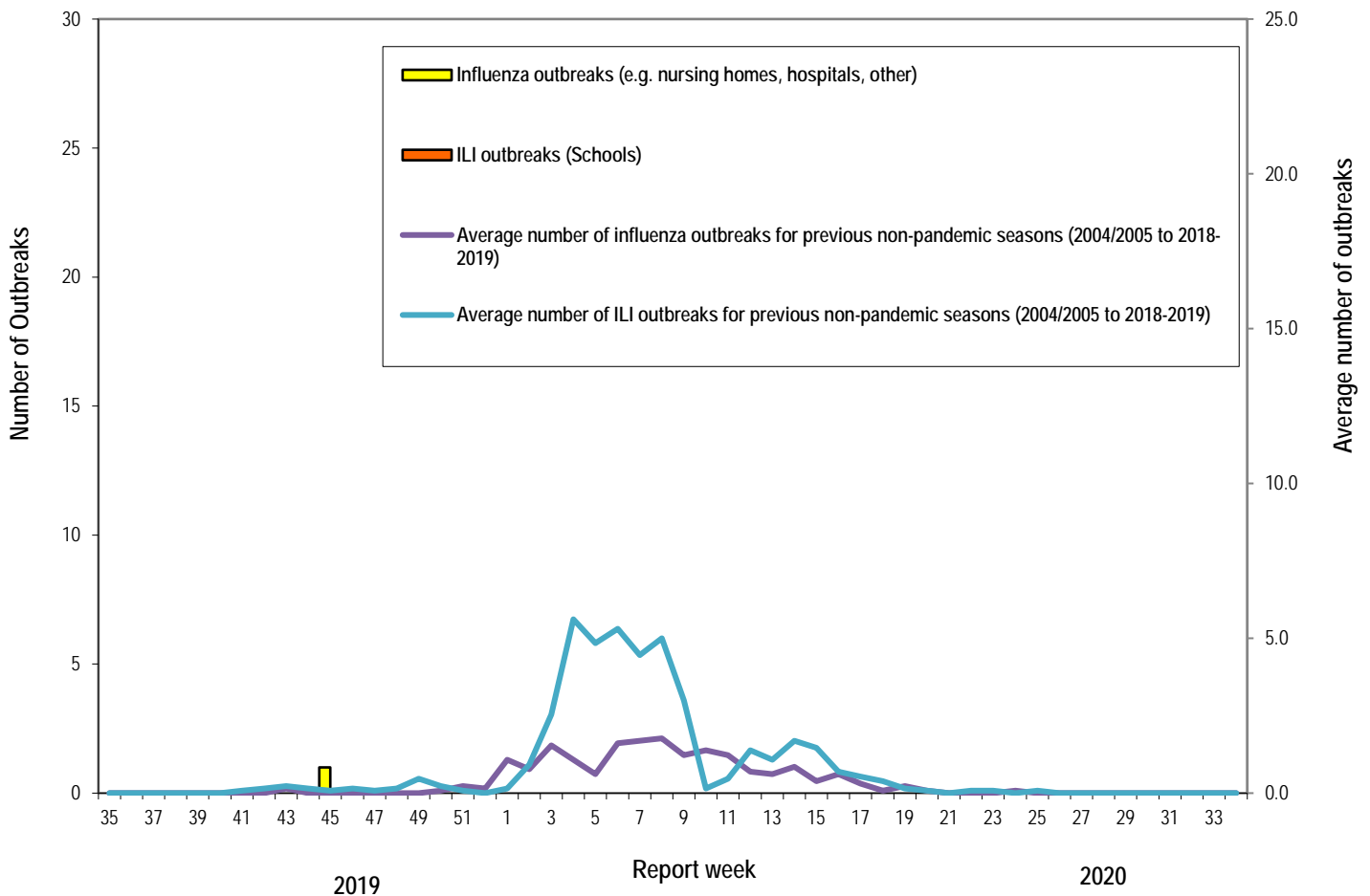
⁴ A total of 28 practitioner sites (16 FluWatch sentinel physicians and 12 NB SPIN sites) are recruited this season to report the number of ILI patients and total patient consultations one day during a reporting week.

3) ILI and Laboratory-Confirmed Outbreak Data

Table 2: ILI activity/outbreaks in New Brunswick nursing homes and schools for the reporting week, current and previous seasons.

	Reporting period: November/17/2019-November/23/2019			Cumulative # of outbreaks season 2019-2020	Cumulative # of outbreaks season 2018-2019
	Lab-confirmed outbreaks in Nursing homes ⁵	ILI school outbreaks ⁶	Lab-confirmed outbreaks in Other settings ⁴		
Zone 1	0 out of 13	0 out of 74	0	0	12
Zone 2	0 out of 16	0 out of 81	0	0	13
Zone 3	0 out of 14	0 out of 95	0	1	6
Zone 4	0 out of 6	0 out of 22	0	0	0
Zone 5	0 out of 2	0 out of 18	0	0	0
Zone 6	0 out of 9	0 out of 35	0	0	4
Zone 7	0 out of 4	0 out of 27	0	0	8
Total NB	0 out of 64	0 out of 352	0	1	43

Graph 3: Number of Influenza Outbreaks (nursing homes, hospitals, other) and ILI Outbreaks (schools) reported to Public Health in New Brunswick, by report week, season 2019/20.

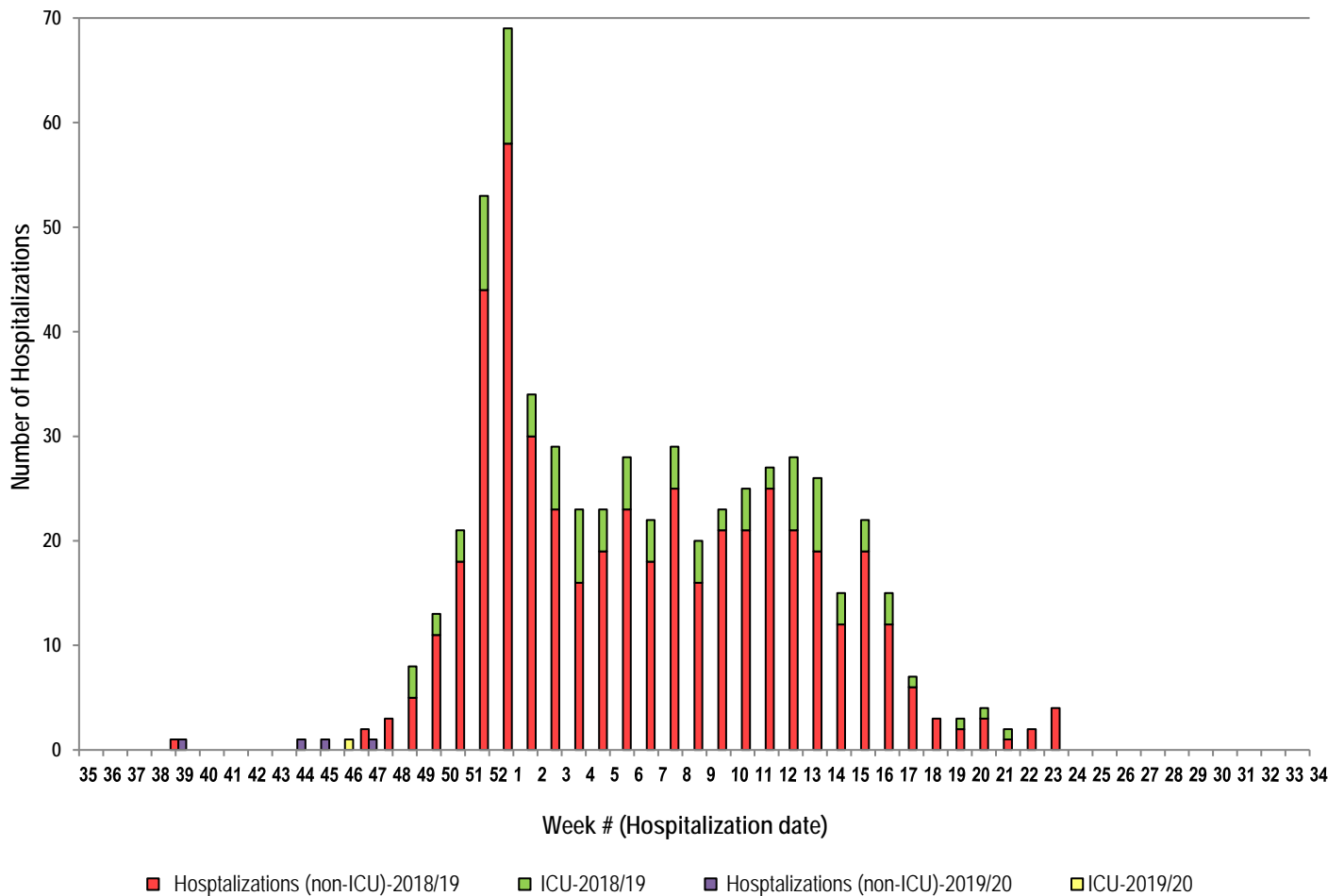


⁵ Two or more ILI cases within a seven day period, including at least one laboratory-confirmed case of influenza. Outbreaks are reported in the week when laboratory confirmation is received.

⁶ Schools reporting greater than 10% absenteeism which is likely due to ILI.

4) Influenza associated Hospitalization⁷ and Death⁸ Surveillance⁹

Graph 4: Influenza associated Hospitalizations and ICU admissions in New Brunswick, by week of hospitalization for current and past season.*



*Those who had been hospitalized 15 days or more prior to laboratory confirmation date were excluded from the graph

**No deaths have been reported so far in season 2019-2020.

National Flu Watch Program - Additional information on influenza activity in Canada and around the world is available on the Public Health Agency of Canada's website at: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/>

Other Links:

World: http://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/latest_update_GIP_surveillance/en/index.html

Europe: http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/seasonal_influenza/epidemiological_data/Pages/Weekly_Influenza_Surveillance_Overview.aspx

PAHO: http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=805&Itemid=569

Australia: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-surveil-ozflu-flucurr.htm>

New Zealand: http://www.surv.esr.cri.nz/virology/influenza_weekly_update.php

Argentina: <http://www.msal.gov.ar/>

South Africa: <http://www.nicd.ac.za/>

US: www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/

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⁷ Hospitalizations (including ICU admissions) are influenza associated; they may or may not be due to influenza.

⁸ Deaths are influenza associated; influenza may not be the direct cause of death.

⁹ In early January 2014, the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health implemented a new provincial surveillance system in collaboration with the Regional Health Authorities to monitor influenza-associated hospitalizations, intensive care unit admissions and deaths. A standardized Enhanced Surveillance Form is used to collect data on hospitalizations.